

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Acme Engineering

Oklahoma Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence

Acme Engineering expands production

Client Profile:

Founded in 1938, Acme Engineering and Manufacturing Corporation is known worldwide for its production of fans, blowers and ventilation equipment. Acme credits its growth over the years to its superior quality, customer loyalty and dedicated workers. The company employs about 300 people at its headquarters in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Situation:

Acme Vice President, Doug Yamashita, desperately needed an objective overview of his facility. The company was preparing for a site visit from a prospective customer. The visit could lead to \$15 million in new annual sales and potentially 100 new employees. While Acme enjoyed a significant share in the industrial, commercial and agricultural markets, company leaders really didn't know if their operation could support a major new client. Yamashita called on Brad Schell and David Wheeler, manufacturing extension agents with the Oklahoma Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence (The Alliance), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:

The Alliance's field agents, Schell and Wheeler, began a comprehensive evaluation of Acme's manufacturing operation. Working with Win Adams, an applications engineer for The Alliance, several technical issues were resolved. New equipment was recommended, and Adams developed an innovative plant design to help increase efficiency. However, to handle a large increase in business the rural manufacturer needed a more holistic change. Three classes of Lean 101 were provided to Acme's upper and middle management. Leaders were impressed with the concepts and immediately took Lean to the shop floor. The boost in productivity and manufacturing capacity was more than enough to impress the potential customer and a contract was soon signed. In addition, Schell worked with the State of Oklahoma on a Quality Jobs contract. The contract will provide Acme with \$1.5 million in tax reimbursements. Wheeler worked with the local Career Tech center to obtain reduced-cost training for Acme's new employees. Currently, Adams is helping Acme with the design of a new paint facility that will handle future increases in production.

Results:

- * \$15 million in increased sales.
- * \$2.5 million in capital improvements.
- * 100 new jobs
- * 30 percent increase in output.

Testimonial:

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"The Alliance was an integral part of this process. Thanks to their efforts, we've improved our production, hired new employees and made the company stronger."

Doug Yamashita, Vice President of Commercial and Industrial Markets